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Request for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the fifty-fourth session

Need to examine the exceptional international situation pertaining to the Republic of China on Taiwan, to ensure that the fundamental right of its twenty-two million people to participate in the work and activities of the United Nations is fully respected

Letter dated 11 August 1999 from the representatives of Burkina Faso, El Salvador, the Gambia, Grenada, Honduras, Liberia, the Marshall Islands, Nicaragua, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Solomon Islands and Swaziland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon the instruction of our respective Governments, we have the honour to request you, pursuant to rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, to include a supplementary item in the agenda of the fifty-fourth session of the Assembly entitled "Need to examine the exceptional international situation pertaining to the Republic of China on Taiwan, to ensure that the fundamental right of its twenty-two million people to participate in the work and activities of the United Nations is fully respected". Pursuant to rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, we attach an explanatory memorandum (see annex I) and a draft resolution (see annex II).

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(*Signed*) Dennie M. J. **Wilson**
Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
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(*Signed*) Ibra Deguène **Ka**
Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations

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Permanent Representative of Solomon Islands to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Moses Mathendele **Dlamini**
Permanent Representative of Swaziland to the United Nations

Annex I

Explanatory memorandum

1. Each side of the Taiwan Strait has been ruled by a distinct and separate Government since 1949.

The Government of the Republic of China, which was founded in 1912, moved to Taiwan in 1949. That same year, the People's Republic of China was established on the Chinese mainland. Since then, the Republic of China on Taiwan and the People's Republic of China on the mainland have coexisted on their respective side of the Taiwan Strait, with neither subject to the other's rule. Over that past half-century, each side has developed its own political system, social values and foreign relations. Therefore, each of these two Governments can only speak for and represent the people actually under its jurisdiction on its respective side of the Taiwan Strait.

2. The General Assembly adopted resolution 2758 (XXVI) in 1971 to confer United Nations membership upon the People's Republic of China. The resolution did not, however, address the issue of representation in the United Nations for the people of the Republic of China on Taiwan.

From 1950 to 1971, the United Nations considered the question of China's representation. The question was considered against the background of political and ideological confrontation created by the cold war. In October 1971, at its twenty-sixth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 2758 (XXVI), in which it decided that the China seat would be taken by the People's Republic of China. This resolution, however, failed to address the issue of legitimate representation for the people on Taiwan in the United Nations.

3. The Republic of China, a country with significant achievements, is a constructive and responsible member of the international community.

The Republic of China on Taiwan has coexisted with the People's Republic of China on the Chinese mainland since 1949 and has been a successful and responsible member of the international community. In fact:

- The Republic of China has continued to exercise effective rule over its territories of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen, Matsu and other islands. It has a population of 22 million and a democratic government. Above all, the Republic of China is a peace-loving country which is able and willing to carry out the obligations contained in the Charter of the United Nations.
- The Republic of China on Taiwan has achieved what many have described as a "miracle" in terms of economic development over the past few decades. It is now the world's nineteenth largest economy in terms of gross national product, and the fourteenth most important trading country. It is also one of the major investors in East Asia and its foreign reserves rank among the top three in the world. All these achievements make the Republic of China on Taiwan, in fact, one of the most successful examples of economic development in the twentieth century.
- The Republic of China is also a humanitarian-minded country. Its international prestige in rendering assistance to developing countries increases daily. Over the years, it has sent over 10,000 experts to train technicians all over the world, especially in Asia, the South Pacific, Latin America and Africa, to help develop their agricultural, fishery and livestock industries. It also has provided over $150 million in disaster relief throughout the world, including mainland China, in the past several years, and has responded to United Nations appeals for emergency relief and rehabilitation assistance to countries that have suffered from natural disasters and wars. Recently, it has pledged a foreign aid package equivalent to $300 million for humanitarian assistance to Kosovar refugees and area reconstruction.
- Currently, the Republic of China on Taiwan contributes capital to regional development

programmes through institutions such as the Asian Development Bank, the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, the Inter-American Development Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

From these major indicators, there is no doubt that the Republic of China has been playing a positive role in promoting world trade and in eradicating poverty. It is indeed a constructive and responsible member, a fact that merits recognition by Members of the United Nations.

4. The Republic of China is a free and democratic country. The United Nations should consider with an open mind the appeal of its 22 million people for their own representation in the Organization.

Resolution 2758 (XXVI), a product of the cold war era, fails to provide for the right of the 22 million people of the Republic of China on Taiwan to representation by their actual and legitimate delegates in the United Nations and its related organizations.

However, tremendous changes have taken place in the past two decades. The cold war has ended, with constructive dialogue and negotiation replacing the hostile confrontation of the past. As an international organization in which every country is represented, where Palestine has achieved a unique status and other entities have been given a place to speak for their peoples, the United Nations should now address this unreasonable and untenable situation.

The Republic of China on Taiwan has carried out a series of political reforms over the past few decades. Today, its people enjoy a high degree of freedom and democracy. It is also determined to find a way to develop cross-strait relations by peaceful means. The Government of the Republic of China on Taiwan seeks a reasonable role in the United Nations and its related organizations by which it can represent the 22 million people on Taiwan. Members of the United Nations should consider with an open mind the appeal of these 22 million people for their participation in that Organization.

5. The participation of the Republic of China on Taiwan in the United Nations poses no barrier to the future peaceful and democratic unification of a divided China; indeed, it can be conducive to regional peace and security.

Since 1949, the Republic of China on Taiwan and the People's Republic of China on the mainland have developed under two different systems of political and social values. The People's Republic of China has never exercised any control over the 22 million people on Taiwan. Therefore, the citizens of the Republic of China on Taiwan are entitled to their own actual and legitimate representation in the United Nations.

The geographical position of Taiwan makes it a focal point of the entire Asia-Pacific region. Accordingly, the stability of the Taiwan Strait and its periphery is vital to the maintenance of peace and security for the region in particular and the world in general. A role for the Republic of China on Taiwan in the United Nations would bring the area under the peace and security mechanism contained in the United Nations, thus enhancing the maintenance of peace and security in the region.

The cases of the now-unified German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany and the still-divided Republic of Korea and Democratic People's Republic of Korea serve as precedents for parallel representation of divided nations in the United Nations. The exchanges between the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany via the United Nations and other international organizations contributed not only to regional peace and security, but also to their peaceful unification in 1990. As a universal organization, the United Nations should therefore encourage both sides of the Taiwan Strait to work and cooperate in it and its related organizations.

6. The General Assembly should act to ensure that the voice of the 22 million people on Taiwan is heard in the United Nations and its related organizations.

Resolution 2758 (XXVI) does not constitute a comprehensive, reasonable and just solution. It only settled the issue of representation for the people on the Chinese mainland, while failing to accommodate the aspirations of 22 million people on Taiwan to participate in the work and

activities of the most important global organization, the United Nations and its related organizations.

The exclusion of the Republic of China on Taiwan from the United Nations is anachronistic, unjust and potentially injurious to international peace and security. The United Nations must address this situation in order to ensure that the 22 million people of the Republic of China have a direct and representative voice in the Organization and its related agencies. A role in the United Nations for the Republic of China would benefit that Organization in particular and the international community in general via the mechanisms provided in that Organization.

Annex II

Draft resolution

The General Assembly,

Considering the fact that the twenty-two million people of the Republic of China on Taiwan have no actual and legitimate representative in the United Nations;

Recognizing that, since 1949, the Government of the Republic of China has exercised effective control and jurisdiction over the Taiwan area while the Government of the People's Republic of China has exercised effective control and jurisdiction over the Chinese mainland during the same time period;

Acknowledging that the Republic of China on Taiwan is a constructive and responsible member of the international community, with a democratic system and a strong, dynamic economy, whose participation in the United Nations would benefit the international community;

Observing that the geographical location of Taiwan is vital to the peace and security of the East Asian and Pacific regions;

Mindful of the fact that, while seeking to participate in the United Nations, the Republic of China continues to espouse hope for the eventual unification of China;

Noting the declaration of the Government of the Republic of China on Taiwan that it accepts without condition the obligations contained in the Charter of the United Nations and that it is able and willing to carry out those obligations;

Affirming the significance that recognition of and respect for the fundamental rights of the twenty-two million people of the Republic of China on Taiwan would have for upholding the principles and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations;

1. *Decides* to establish a working group of the General Assembly with the mandate of examining thoroughly the exceptional international situation pertaining to the Republic of China on Taiwan, in order to ensure that its twenty-two million people participate, with a direct and representative voice, in the Organization and its related agencies;

2. *Requests* the working group to commence its work during the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly, and make appropriate recommendations for an equitable and practical solution to the question of the participation of the Republic of China in the United Nations.